

2 Samuel 19 - Thursday, July 9th, 2015

- At the end of chapter 18, David had received the news that while they had been victorious, his son Absalom had been killed.
- Instead of rejoicing in the victory David mourns the death of his son, which will create some problems, as we're about to see.
- It's important to understand that at this point, David only knows that Absalom is dead, but he doesn't know that Joab killed him.

1 And Joab was told, "Behold, the king is weeping and mourning for Absalom." 2 So the victory that day was turned into mourning for all the people. For the people heard it said that day, "The king is grieved for his son." 3 And the people stole back into the city that day, as people who are ashamed steal away when they flee in battle. 4 But the king covered his face, and the king cried out with a loud voice, "O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!"

- What David does here, in all fairness to him, is certainly understandable given that he is just heartbroken over his son's death.
- However, in doing this, David is creating for himself a very serious problem as it relates to the moral of his men and his nation.
- This speaks to a dynamic in leadership. By way of illustration, the leader is the thermostat and the follower is the thermometer.

5 Then Joab came into the house to the king, and said, "Today you have disgraced all your servants who today have saved your life, the lives of your sons and daughters, the lives of your wives and the lives of your concubines, 6 in that you love your enemies and hate your friends. For you have declared today that you regard neither princes nor servants; for today I perceive that if Absalom had lived and all of us had died today, then it would have pleased you well. 7 Now therefore, arise, go out and speak comfort to your servants. For I swear by the LORD, if you do not go out, not one will stay with you this night. And that will be worse for you than all the evil that has befallen you from your youth until now."

- To Joab's credit, he's willing to do the right thing and hard thing by telling David the truth about his foolishness and selfishness.
- However, it's my belief that he's doing the right thing with the wrong heart. Yes, for the most part what he says is certainly true.
- It's not what he says; it's how he says what he says. Rather than speak the truth in love and humility, Joab speaks it angrily.

Charles Spurgeon of this said, "Joab was probably right, but his manner was rough and unfeeling. It is always well to speak gently, even when we are required to be firm."

Proverbs 15:1 (NKJV) — 1 A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.

The Speech Research Unit of Kenyon College proved through tests that when a person is shouted at, he simply cannot help but shout back.... You can use this scientific knowledge to keep another person from becoming angry: control the other person's tone of voice by your own voice. Psychology has proved that if you keep your voice soft you will not become angry. Psychology has accepted as scientific the old Biblical injunction, "A soft answer turneth away wrath."

Proverbs 25:15 (NKJV) — 15 By long forbearance a ruler is persuaded, And a gentle tongue breaks a bone.

8 Then the king arose and sat in the gate. And they told all the people, saying, "There is the king, sitting in the gate." So all the people came before the king. For everyone of Israel had fled to his tent. 9 Now all the people were in a dispute throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "The king saved us from the hand of our enemies, he delivered us from the hand of the Philistines, and now he has fled from the land because of Absalom. 10 But Absalom, whom we anointed over us, has died in battle. Now therefore, why do you say nothing about bringing back the king?" 11 So King David sent to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, saying, "Speak to the elders of Judah, saying, 'Why are you the last to bring the king back to his house, since the words of all Israel have come to the king, to his very house? 12 You are my brethren, you are my bone and my flesh. Why then are you the last to bring back the king?' 13 And say to Amasa, 'Are you not my bone and my flesh? God do so to me, and more also, if you are not commander of the army before me continually in place of Joab.'"

- It's interesting to note that David sort of comes to his senses and realizes that as king, he must put his feelings aside and lead.
- However, once he does, he quickly realizes that of all the tribes of Israel, his own tribe of Judah, is the one not showing loyalty.
- In spite of this and in light of this, David in his wisdom from above, offers his nephew Amasa, Joab's job as military commander.

- The reason this is the wisdom from above is because David is keenly aware of three very important things it will accomplish.
- First, it will raise the moral of the nation, second, it will remove the fear of retribution, and third, it will serve as a rebuke to Joab.
- I would suggest David now knows that Joab is the one who killed Absalom, and he did it in direct defiance to David's command.

- There's something else I want to point out in what David does here and it has to do with the way he goes about reconciliation.
- Notice David does not seek to reestablish his authority by force; rather, he seeks only to bring about this restoration by peace.
- The reason I point this out is because his own tribe of Judah had rejected David's reign as king when they accepted Absalom's.

Allan Redpath - "David didn't lift a finger to re-establish his authority ... His return to sovereignty was decided by the voluntary submission of his kinsmen and by their loving obedience to his will."

14 So he swayed the hearts of all the men of Judah, just as the heart of one man, so that they sent this word to the king: "Return, you and all your servants!" 15 Then the king returned and came to the Jordan. And Judah came to Gilgal, to go to meet the king, to escort the king across the Jordan. 16 And Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, who was from Bahurim, hurried and came down with the men of Judah to meet King David.

17 There were a thousand men of Benjamin with him, and Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they went over the Jordan before the king. 18 Then a ferryboat went across to carry over the king's household, and to do what he thought good. Now Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king when he had crossed the Jordan. 19 Then he said to the king, "Do not let my lord impute iniquity to me, or remember what wrong your servant did on the day that my lord the king left Jerusalem, that the king should take it to heart. 20 For I, your servant, know that I have sinned. Therefore here I am, the first to come today of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king." 21 But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, "Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD's anointed?" 22 And David said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah, that you should be adversaries to me today? Shall any man be put to death today in Israel? For do I not know that today I am king over Israel?" 23 Therefore the king said to Shimei, "You shall not die." And the king swore to him.

- If it seems like you've met this Shimei guy before that's because you've met this Shimei guy before when David fled Jerusalem.
- Make no mistake about it; what Shimei does here is as insincere as it is disingenuous. He knows that he's a dead man walking.
- What he doesn't know is David is kind, forgiving, and gracious, which ironically is the opposite of what Shimei accused him of.

24 Now Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king. And he had not cared for his feet, nor trimmed his mustache, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he returned in peace. 25 So it was, when he had come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said to him, "Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?" 26 And he answered, "My lord, O king, my servant deceived me. For your servant said, 'I will saddle a donkey for myself, that I may ride on it and go to the king,' because your servant is lame. 27 And he has slandered your servant to my lord the king, but my lord the king is like the angel of God. Therefore do what is good in your eyes. 28 For all my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king. Yet you set your servant among those who eat at your own table. Therefore what right have I still to cry out anymore to the king?" 29 So the king said to him, "Why do you speak anymore of your matters? I have said, 'You and Ziba divide the land.' " 30 Then Mephibosheth said to the king, "Rather, let him take it all, inasmuch as my lord the king has come back in peace to his own house."

- We talked about this back when we were in 2 Samuel chapter 16, where Ziba had deceived David concerning Mephibosheth.
- What's interesting about this is Mephibosheth cares nothing about the inheritance as evidenced by what he says in verse 30.
- Again, this is ironic as well such that, the accusations Ziba made of Mephibosheth were also the polar opposite of who he was.

G. Campbell Morgan - "For his own enrichment this man cared nothing at all. It was everything to him that his king should come into the possession of his kingdom in peace ... It is to be feared that too often we are more concerned about our rights than about His. It is a great and glorious thing when our loyalty and love make us far more concerned about the victories of our Lord, than about our own unquestioned rights. Yet that should be the normal attitude of all who sit at the King's Table."

31 And Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim and went across the Jordan with the king, to escort him across the Jordan. 32 Now Barzillai was a very aged man, eighty years old. And he had provided the king with supplies while he stayed at Mahanaim, for he was a very rich man. 33 And the king said to Barzillai, "Come across with me, and I will provide for you while you are with me in Jerusalem." 34 But Barzillai said to the king, "How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? 35 I am today eighty years old. Can I discern between the good and bad? Can your servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Can I hear any longer the voice of singing men and singing women? Why then should your servant be a further burden to my lord the king? 36 Your servant will go a little way across the Jordan with the king. And why should the king repay me with such a reward? 37 Please let your servant turn back again, that I may die in my own city, near the grave of my father and mother. But here is your servant Chimham; let him cross over with my lord the king, and do for him what seems good to you." 38 And the king answered, "Chimham shall cross over with me, and I will do for him what seems good to you. Now whatever you request of me, I will do for you." 39 Then all the people went over the Jordan. And when the king had crossed over, the king kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and he returned to his own place. 40 Now the king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him. And all the people of Judah escorted the king, and also half the people of Israel. 41 Just then all the men of Israel came to the king, and said to the king, "Why have our brethren, the men of Judah, stolen you away and brought the king, his household, and all David's men with him across the Jordan?" 42 So all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, "Because the king is a close relative of ours. Why then are you angry over this matter? Have we ever eaten at the king's expense? Or has he given us any gift?" 43 And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said, "We have ten shares in the king; therefore we also have more right to David than you. Why then do you despise us—were we not the first to advise bringing back our king?" Yet the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.

- Here again, David true to form shows kindness this time to Barzillai who had provided him much needed supplies when he fled.
- Be that as it may, David is quickly met with internal strife between the Northern tribes of Israel and the David's tribe of Judah.
- Sadly this will lead to a civil war of sorts during the time of David's reign and eventually divide the nation into two different parts.